

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (Previously presented) A system comprising a plurality of devices, one of the devices operating as a task source device and at least one other device operating as a member of a synchrony group,

the task source device being configured to distribute a series of tasks to the synchrony group, each task being associated with a time stamp indicating a time, relative to a clock maintained by the task source device, at which the devices comprising the synchrony group are to execute the respective task.
2. (Original) A system as defined in claim 1 in which the synchrony group comprises a plurality of member devices.
3. (Previously presented) A system as defined in claim 2 in which each device comprising a member of the synchrony group is further configured to execute each task that it receives from the task source device at the determined time.
4. (Original) A system as defined in claim 3 in which the member devices are configured to execute respective tasks in synchrony.
5. (Previously presented) A system as defined in claim 2 in which one of the member devices operates as a master device configured to perform at least one type of synchrony group management operation.
6. (Previously presented) A system as defined in claim 5 further including a user interface module configured to control the master device.

7-8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously presented) A system as defined in claim 5, the system comprising at least one additional device in which the master device is configured to enable the at least one additional device to join the synchrony group as a slave device.

10. (Previously presented) A system as defined in claim 9 in which the task source device is configured to distribute tasks to the member devices using a selected multi-cast transmission methodology.

11-18. (Canceled)

19. (Previously presented) A system as defined in claim 5 in which the member device operating as the master device is configured to enable the master device to migrate from one member device to another member device in the system.

20. (Previously presented) A system as defined in claim 5 in which the master device is configured to enable the task source device to migrate from one device to another device in the system.

21-30. (Canceled)

31. (Original) A system as defined in claim 1 in which at least one member device is further configured to adjust its clock rate.

32. (Canceled)

33. (Original) A system as defined in claim 1 in which at least one other device operates as a task source device configured to distribute tasks to a second synchrony group.

34-64. (Canceled)

65. (Previously presented) A device for executing a series of tasks provided by a task source at times specified by the task source in relation to a clock maintained by the task source, the device comprising:

an interface module configured to receive the series of tasks;

a current time retrieval module configured to obtain from the task source a current time value;

an execution time determination module configured to determine a time at which the task is to be executed; and

a task execution module configured to execute each respective task.

66. (Original) A device as defined in claim 65 further including a control module for controlling execution of commands received by said interface module.

67-85. (Canceled)

86. (Currently amended) A device as defined in claim 65 further including:

a migration information receiving module configured to receive migration information from the task source device; and

a migration control module configured to distribute the series of tasks to ~~the~~ a synchrony group.

87-90. (Canceled)

91. (Currently amended) A device as defined in claim 65 further including a clock rate adjustment module configured to adjust ~~the~~ a member device's clock rate.

92-108. (Canceled)

109. (Currently amended) A method of operating a system comprising the steps of:
distributing a series of tasks to a synchrony group, the synchrony group comprising at least one device; and
associating each of the tasks with a time stamp[[:]], wherein the time stamp indicates ~~indicating~~ a time, relative to a clock maintained by a task source device, at which the at least one device[[s]] comprising the synchrony group is ~~are~~ to execute the respective tasks.
110. (Original) A method as defined in claim 109 in which the synchrony group comprises a plurality of member devices.
111. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 110 further comprising the step of enabling a member of the synchrony group to execute each task that it receives from the task source device at the a determined time.
112. (Original) A method as defined in claim 111 further comprising the step of enabling the member devices to execute respective tasks in synchrony.
113. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 110 further comprising the step of enabling a member device to perform at least one type of synchrony group management operation.
114. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 113 further comprising the step of controlling a master device's distribution of status information.
- 115-116. (Canceled)
117. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 109, further comprising the step of enabling at least one additional device to join the synchrony group as a slave device.

118. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 110 further comprising the step of distributing tasks to the member devices using a selected multi-cast transmission methodology.

119-120. (Canceled)

121. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 109 further comprising the step of controlling the series of tasks to be distributed by the task source device.

122-126. (Canceled)

127. (Currently amended) A method as defined in claim 110 further comprising the step of migrating ~~the~~ a function of one member device to another member device.

128. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 127 further comprising the step of enabling the task source device to migrate from one device to another device in the system.

129-137. (Canceled)

138. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 109 further comprising the step of obtaining information associated with the tasks from at least two types of information sources.

139. (Currently amended) A method as defined in claim 110 further comprising the step of adjusting ~~the~~ a clock rate of a member device.

140. (Canceled)

141. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 109 further comprising the step of distributing tasks to a second synchrony group.

142-155. (Canceled)

156. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 109 further comprising the step of obtaining information associated with the tasks from a single information source.

157-200. (Canceled)

201. (Previously presented) A method of operating a device comprising the steps of:
obtaining a series of tasks;
determining a time at which each respective task is to be executed; and
transmitting the series of tasks from the device to at least one other device.

202. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 201 further comprising the step of utilizing a selected multi-cast transmission methodology.

203-205. (Canceled)

206. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 201 in which the series of tasks includes a series of task sequences.

207-217. (Canceled)

218. (Currently amended) A computer readable storage medium having embodied thereon a computer program, the computer program being executable by a computer processor to for use in connection with a computer to provide a device for executing a series of tasks provided by a task source at times specified by the task source in relation to a clock maintained by the task source, the computer program comprising a ~~computer-readable medium having encoded thereon:~~

an interface module configured to enable the computer to receive the series of tasks, each task being associated with a time stamp, each time stamp indicating a time value;

a current time retrieval module configured to enable the computer to obtain, from the task source, a current time values;

an execution time determination module configured to enable the computer to determine, from the time stamp associated with each respective task a time at which the task is to be executed; and

a task execution module configured to enable the computer to execute each respective task at the time determined by the execution time determination module.

219. (Previously presented) A computer program as defined in claim 218 further including a control module for enabling said computer to control execution of commands received by the interface module.

220. (Canceled)

221. (Previously presented) A computer program as defined in claim 218 in which the series of tasks includes a series of task sequences.

222-228. (Canceled)

229. (Currently amended) A computer program product as defined in claim 219 in which, in response to control information to enable another device to become a member of ~~the~~ a device's synchrony group, the control module enables the interface module to transmit a command to the other device to enable the other device to become a member of the device's synchrony group.

230-232. (Canceled)

233. (Previously presented) A computer program as defined in claim 218 in which the interface module is further configured to enable the computer to transmit the tasks to at least one other device.

234-243. (Canceled)

244. (Previously presented) A computer program as defined in claim 218 further including a clock rate adjustment module configured to enable the computer to adjust the device's clock rate.

245-548. (Canceled)

549. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 wherein each member device is further configured to periodically obtain from the task source device an indication of a current time value indicated by the task source device's clock.

550. (Previously presented) The system of claim 549 wherein each member device is further configured to determine, from the time stamp associated with each respective task and a time differential value representing a difference between the current time value indicated by the task source device's clock, and a current time value indicated by its respective clock, a time, relative to its respective clock, at which it is to execute the task.
551. (Previously presented) The system of claim 6 wherein the master device is further configured to provide status information relating to the status of the synchrony group to the user interface module.
552. (Previously presented) The system of claim 10 wherein the task source device is enabled to transmit at least one previously distributed task to the slave device using a selected unicast transmission methodology.
553. (Previously presented) The system of claim 31 wherein the clock rate of the at least one member device is adjusted in relation to a clock rate value maintained by the task source device's clock.
554. (Previously presented) The system of claim 33 wherein the device operating as the task source device for the first synchrony group is also operating as a member device of a second synchrony group.
555. (Previously presented) The device of claim 86 wherein the migration control module is further configured to notify the members of the synchrony group that it is to thereafter operate as the task source device.

556. (Currently amended) The method of claim 114 wherein the master device is further enabled to provide status information relating to the status of the synchrony group to ~~the~~ a user interface module.
557. (Currently amended) A system for synchronizing operations among a plurality of digital data processing devices comprising:
an interface module configured to control one or more synchrony groups;
at least one task distribution device configured to distribute tasks over a network; and
at least one member device configured to perform the tasks in synchrony.
558. (Canceled)
559. (Canceled)
560. (Canceled)
561. (Canceled)
562. (Currently amended) The system of claim 557 wherein the task distribution device is further configured to enable the at least one member device to initiate ~~without appreciable delay~~ the a performance of the tasks in synchrony without delay perceivable by a listener.
563. (Currently amended) The system of claim 557 wherein the task distribution device is further configured to allow one or more additional member devices to join without ~~appreciable delay~~ perceivable by a listener or disengage without ~~appreciable delay~~ perceivable by a listener the at least one member device's synchronous performance.

564. (Previously presented) The system of claim 557 wherein the at least one task distribution device is further configured to obtain information associated with the tasks from at least one information source.
565. (Previously presented) The system of claim 557 wherein the at least one task distribution device is independently clocked.
566. (Previously presented) The system of claim 557 wherein the at least one member device is independently clocked.
567. (Previously presented) The system of claim 557 wherein each of the tasks is associated with a time stamp relative to a clock maintained by the at least one task distribution device.
568. (Previously presented) The system of claim 557 wherein the tasks comprise audio tracks.
569. (Canceled)
570. (Canceled)
571. (Canceled)
572. (Canceled)
573. (Previously presented) The system of claim 564 wherein the at least one information source is an Internet broadcast.

574. (Previously presented) The system of claim 564 wherein the at least one information source is a satellite broadcast.
575. (Previously presented) The system of claim 567 wherein the time stamp represents when the at least one member device is to execute the task.
576. (Previously presented) A system for synchronizing operations among a plurality of digital data processing devices comprising a zone player residing within one or more audio reproduction devices.